

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Introduction

The City of Greensboro Strategic Planning Process began in October of 1996 with the decision by City management to develop a strategic plan by the end of 1997. The Management Team, comprised of the City Manager, the two Assistant City Managers and eighteen Department Heads, was named the Strategic Planning Executive Committee. The Budget and Evaluation Director was named Strategic Planning Coordinator.

Step 1. Environmental Scan

The first step in the process was to develop a "broad brush review" of the internal and external factors, which impact the organization's ability to accomplish its mission. This review, titled *City of Greensboro Environmental Scan*, was developed by an appointed internal group, the Technical Committee, and was published in April of 1997. This document describes a set of key findings relating to the City of Greensboro's internal and external environment.

Step 2. Selection of Major Issues

Once the *Environmental Scan* was published, the Strategic Planning Executive Committee identified and selected four major issues for further study by the organization. The selection of these issues from among all of the issues defined within the *Scan* was managed through a process, which included defined criteria for each issue's potential selection.

The four issues selected included Vision and Management Philosophy, Integrated Planning and Performance, Service Alignment, and Technology.

Step 3. Task Force Reports

These four issues were assigned to separate organizational task forces to examine the current status of the issue, to research the issue, to develop alternative strategies necessary to accomplish the assignment, to recommend the one or more strategies to be undertaken by the organization, to determine the necessary resources to implement and maintain the strategies and to establish an implementation schedule including who is responsible for specific steps, an estimated time frame for all implementation steps and sources of the necessary resources for full implementation.

Task force reports were completed by the end of September 1997 and recommended actions from

each were presented to the Executive Committee in October 1997.

Step 4. Development of Greensboro Strategic Plan

Following completion of the task force reports, the Executive Committee reviewed the reports and approved action plans for each issue. *The Greensboro Strategic Plan*, incorporating the selected strategies and action plans to manage the four issues, was written by the Executive Committee by the end of December 1997.

Step 5. Implementation of Greensboro Strategic Plan

Approximately 85% of the overall strategic plan has been implemented since 1998. This is a significant achievement rate and more progress is anticipated in the next year. Specific tasks undertaken during FY 04-05 include the following:

- Continued Implementation of the City of Greensboro's Comprehensive Plan.
- Reviewing and undertaking the next steps in the City of Greensboro's Strategic Planning Process.

Future Strategic Planning Focus Areas

During FY 03-04 a renewed effort in the City's strategic planning was undertaken. This effort, spearheaded by an Assistant City Manager and the Budget and Evaluation Director, provided for reinitiating the Technical Committee.

The Technical Committee was charged with using supporting data to update the status of the 15 major key findings of the *Environmental Scan*. The following is to be accomplished by the Technical Committee:

- 1) Identify what, if any, strategy was developed in the 1997 Strategic Plan to address the finding.
- 2) Document the progress of implementation, if applicable.
- 3) Update the status of the finding itself. (Does current data indicate the finding is still valid, growing, shrinking, etc.?)

The updated report is now completed and has been forwarded to the City Manager's Office for review and action.

Action by the City Manager's Office could include development of additional strategies to continue addressing these key findings or the start of a new strategic planning process to identify and impact other issues that may be more relevant today.

